

## Intellectual Property Rights

Intellectual property rights (IPR) encourage the innovation and creativity that are fundamental to sustained economic growth. In 2010 alone, U.S. industries relying most intensively on intellectual property (IP) accounted for over \$5 trillion—or nearly 35%—of U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) and 27.1 million American jobs. Unfortunately, the global trade in counterfeit and pirated goods causes significant U.S. trade losses and threatens innovation, jobs, health, and safety.

The U.S. government has expanded efforts to improve the business environment in foreign markets, developed numerous free, publicly available resources to educate U.S. companies, and leveraged our international law enforcement relationships to dismantle the criminal networks that manufacture and distribute fake goods. These efforts underscore our continuing commitment to level the playing field for American businesses and workers, and to keep consumers safe.

Owners of intellectual property, by effectively protecting and enforcing their IPR, play a critical role in the fight against counterfeit and pirated goods. This guide is part of an effort to help IP owners take charge of their rights. You can get further assistance by calling the STOPfakes hotline at **1-866-999-HALT** or visiting **STOPfakes.gov**, an online one-stop shop for information about obtaining and enforcing IPR.

The United States government launched **STOPfakes.gov** to provide U.S. rights holders with IPR educational resources, tools, and program updates. Additionally, the web site allows businesses to file electronic complaints about IPR-related trade problems, which are answered within 10 days by a trade specialist. Rights holders may also call 1-866-999-HALT, a hotline answered by IPR experts who can help U.S. businesses secure and enforce their IPR in the U.S. and internationally. To report IPR crimes, call 1-866-IPR-2060.

**[www.STOPfakes.gov](http://www.STOPfakes.gov)**

IPR Expert Hotline: **1-866-999-HALT**

National IPR Center: **1-866-IPR-2060**



## **PROTECTING YOUR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

**A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE**

**STOPfakes.gov** 

## Step 1: Protection at Home

### Assess your intellectual property rights (IPR)

Our online [IPR Training Module](#) teaches you to evaluate, protect and enforce your IPR in the U.S. and overseas. The module is available free of charge in English, Spanish, and French at [STOPfakes.gov](#).

### Protect your IPR in the United States

The [U.S. Patent and Trademark Office \(USPTO\)](#) issues patents and federal trademark registrations. For more information on obtaining a patent or registering a trademark in the United States, contact the USPTO at (800) 786-9199. To file electronically, visit:

Patent: [www.uspto.gov/patents/process/file/efs](http://www.uspto.gov/patents/process/file/efs)

Trademark: [www.uspto.gov/trademarks/teas](http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/teas)

Copyright automatically attaches to a work upon creation (when it is fixed in a tangible medium). Even though registration is not a requirement for copyright protection, it is required to bring an infringement lawsuit in the U.S. and provides other important benefits. For more information, contact the [U.S. Copyright Office](#) at (877) 476-0778 or visit [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov).

### Prevent importation of fake goods

[U.S. Customs and Border Protection \(CBP\)](#) personnel at U.S. ports of entry use the IPR recordation database to prevent entry of copyright and trademark infringing goods into the U.S. market. Record your registered rights electronically at [apps.cbp.gov/e-recordations](http://apps.cbp.gov/e-recordations) or call (202) 325-0020 to consult a CBP IPR attorney.

## Step 2: Protection Abroad

### Educate yourself about IPR protection in foreign markets

Use these free resources, available at [STOPfakes.gov/business-tools](#):

- The [IPR Training Module](#) will teach you the basics of IPR protection and enforcement.
- [IPR Country Toolkits](#) contain information on IPR protection and enforcement in many key foreign markets.
- The [International IPR Advisory Program](#) offers U.S. small businesses a free, one-hour consultation with a volunteer attorney knowledgeable in both industry IPR issues and a particular country's IPR regime.
- The [China Webinar Series](#) keeps you updated on the latest IPR developments in China. Protecting and enforcing your IPR in China is critical to the success of your company.
- The [Transatlantic IPR Portal](#) provides access to the full range of U.S. and European resources developed to assist rights holders in their IPR protection and enforcement efforts.

### Protect your IP assets globally

A U.S. patent or trademark registration will not protect you in other countries. International agreements facilitate registration in multiple countries with a single application. Learn more from the World Intellectual Property Organization at:

[Patent Cooperation Treaty](#): [www.wipo.int/pct/en](http://www.wipo.int/pct/en)

[Madrid System for the International Registration of Marks \(trademark\)](#): [www.wipo.int/madrid/en](http://www.wipo.int/madrid/en)

## Step 3: Global Enforcement

### Be vigilant in the marketplace

Monitor the marketplace for unauthorized use of your IPR, and act quickly if you detect a problem. Remember the International IPR Advisory Program is available to counsel U.S. small businesses.

### Work with law enforcement in-country

The IPR Toolkits on [STOPfakes.gov](#) provide country-specific enforcement information. For countries not covered by the toolkits, U.S. Embassy staff in-country can help point you to the right agency.

### Overcome trade barriers

The Department of Commerce International Trade Administration (ITA) helps U.S. companies reap the benefits of trade agreements and treaty commitments. ITA's trade specialists stand ready to assemble teams of U.S. government experts to assist U.S. companies to enforce their IPR in foreign markets. We can suggest strategies to evaluate IPR problems encountered abroad and will work with you to resolve problems. Report trade barriers at [STOPfakes.gov/contact](#).

Contact us at [www.STOPfakes.gov/contact](http://www.STOPfakes.gov/contact).